

Arrows and Dragons and Heartstrings

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Summary: After a treaty between the vikings and highlanders, Merida gets a chance to learn how to kill dragons. But her mother still has expectations for her and a husband must be chosen. Merida and Hiccup help each other realize that they are more than what is expected, and greater than can be defined.

1. Chapter 1 (Intro: Merida)

Merida whirled around the mast of the ship. Her wiled hair went flying in all directions and her blue dress flapped in the breeze. She let out a giddy laugh as she began to crawl up the post to the bird's nest.

"Merida! Do be careful! What would your mother do to me if you fell and broke your neck!" her father called, laughter edging into his voice as swung around the mast as she climbed past the birds nest onto the post that held the sail. She could see it, the island of Berk. This was where her next great adventure would await. She would join the Viking teens, along with a handful of highlander teens, in dragon training. Berk was the only island that was known to have dragons, but that didn't mean that the training wouldn't come in handy. And part of the treaty between the highlanders and Vikings was that the highlanders were given the right to learn if they so wished. Merida's father had fought hard for Merida to be allowed to go to the training. According to her mother "A lady does not fight dragons" but eventually her father had won, saying that she needed a good activity to release all her energy. That worked for Merida, so long as she got to kill a few dragons it was all the same!

"Merida, get down before your mother see's you!" Her father's voice cut through her thoughts, pulling her back to reality. She swung down onto the mast and slid down, her fire red hair disheveled from the wind. She could barely contain her excitement as she looked at the island as it slowly began to consume the horizon.

"What if a dragon should see our ships?" Merida wondered aloud.

"Well, then we are all dead," her father let out a hearty laugh, but then turned to face his daughter "dragons rarely fly in the day, they prefer the element of surprise. Nights are what you should worry most about." Merida nodded, but had stopped listening. She was so close; she could feel the world waiting for her. Her father sighed, knowing that her mind was elsewhere.

"Dad... Thanks." He didn't respond. He knew she didn't want him to. It was a thanks that she had begrudgingly given. Not because she wasn't grateful, but because she didn't know how. She was stubborn, like his wife, and didn't always know how to let others help her. That made it hard for her to admit when she needed help. So the Bear-king just smiled and nodded.

"Why don't I go see how your mother is doing with the boysâ€¦" Fergus said as he began to trudge below deck.

2. Chapter 2 (Intro: Hiccup)

Useless. That was the word. Hiccup was useless. He was too scrawny. He was too clumsy. He was too _unviking_. Everyone knew it just by looking at him, and because of that, he never got the chance to prove himself. He scuffled along towards the street, his hair draped in front of his eyes as he hunched over himself. He kicked a pebble with his fur boots. Soon the highlanders would be coming, just another group of kids to make fun of him. Finally he had reached his destination. He pushed open the door to the blacksmith.

"Oy! 'Bout time yeh got here!" Gobber said from under a pile of metal. Hiccup shrugged as he tied on his apron and begun pumping he flame. "What's got you all silent?" Gobber continued as Hiccup added wood to the stove.

"Nothing. I'm just so excited to make a fool out of myself in front of the highlanders."

"What? Those lot? They wont be here long enough to remember your name. Honestly, the moment they see a real dragon, they will swim back home." Gobber let out a hearty chuckle and hiccup managed a small smile. Gobber was the only person that hiccup considered a friend, and that was a bit sad because the Viking was his mentor and father's closest friend. Berk wasn't known for its friendly teenagers, it was known for its hard warriors, which meant hard kids were encouraged. Kids like Hiccup weren't.

"Hey Gobberâ€¦" Gobber turned, "I justâ€¦ Do you need a hand?" Gobber smiled and nodded. Hiccup didn't need to finish, Gobber knew. Hiccup smiled and grabbed the hammer that attached to Gobbers arm. The Viking took it and the two of them began work on the orders of weapons that had begun to pile up.

3. Chapter 3 Hiccup's Guide to Berk

Hiccup was expected to be at the docks when the Highlanders arrived. But Hiccup was expected to do and be a lot of things, and he was

known to disappoint. Obviously he couldn't show up on time, that would be too easy. He had to scramble down at the last minute. He had to show up out of breath and slightly disheveled looking. Stoick the Vast sighed. He hadn't really expected anything else from his son. Snotlout smirked, as though he had won something. And maybe he had, after all he was the embodiment of what a young Viking boy should be. He was also Hiccup's cousin, making it that much worse. Hiccup pretended to ignore it, that was what he always did. Instead he began watching the passengers unload from the ship. He watched as three young redheaded boys ran off the boat and after a plate of pastries being carried by a handmaid. He nodded to the nobles and their sons, trying to suppress a smile, as they shoved each other, each trying to get off first. He bowed as the king stepped off, his wife on his arm. A young girl, about his age, followed them. She had a mane of curly red hair. She radiated power, she glowed with it. A quiver was strapped to her back and she carried a bow in her hands. He figured she must be the princess, but as he watched her, he grew less certain. She certainly didn't act like one. Instead of walking off the plank that attached the boat to the dock, she stood on the ledge of the boat and jumped. She landed on all fours almost directly in front of Hiccup. He stumbled backwards a bit. She hopped up and looked Hiccup directly in the eyes, as if she were studying him. Her blue eyes pierced through his green eyes. She seemed to be making a decision, though he had no idea what it was.

"Hi! I'm Merida." Her accent was heavy, and it fit her perfectly.

"Ermâ€¦ Hi I'm, uh, Hiccupâ€¦" He stumbled over his words and couldn't quite seem to meet her eyes. But she seemed pleased with that answer.

"Well Hiccup, when I can get free of my mother, you have to show me around the island." He nodded, unsure what to say. Why was this girl talking to him, not that he minded but he wasn't exactly the type of person that girls are lining up to talk toâ€¦ or anyone for that matter. Hiccup watched as Merida weaved her way through the crowd and up towards the town.

Later that night, when Stoick and Hiccup sat down to eat, Hiccup noticed his father's peculiar behavior. Stoick would look like he was about to say something, and then he would stop, and then he would try again, and then stop. Hiccup began to think his father was trying to impersonate a fish. Finally Stoick seemed to find the right words,

"Son, I think thatâ€¦ what I mean isâ€¦ The princess seemed to take an interest in you andâ€¦"

"Whoa, Dad no. She jumped off the ship and landed in front of me. She probably just didn't want to make it awkward so she struck up a conversation and-" Hiccup was interrupted by a knock on the door. Hiccup pushed back his chair and went to open the door. Merida stood impatiently outside.

"Can I help you?" Hiccup questioned, not sure of what to make of the situation.

"I said when I got free of my mother you had to show me aroundâ€¦ Well I got free." Hiccup was entranced by the rhythm of her voice.

The way the words melted together to embody her emotion, it was incredible.

"Oh well, it's darkâ€|" Hiccup said, as though the answer was obvious. Merida just stared at him. "Dragons and darknessâ€| not really supposed to go outâ€|" Merida had begun to pout, "Well maybe if we stayed in the townâ€|" Merida grabbed his hand and pulled him out of the house. Hiccup had just enough time to shout to his father that he was taking Merida out to the town and would be back soon.

Merida walked with her hands clasped behind her back, her shoulders thrown back causing her to stand tall, and her hair, there just weren't words. Merida skipped in front of Hiccup, blocking his path.

"I have a question for you Hiccup," Hiccup nodded for her to continue, "You don't look like I would expect a Viking to," She seemed to notice that he had taken offense, "Not that that's a bad thing! I was just wondering, are you lonely?" The question startled Hiccup. He had been listening to her accent again, she said I like Ah and wondering like woundrin'. Her speech was intoxicating. But the question snapped him back into reality.

"Yes," was all he said. She nodded like that was enough of an answer.

"I'm lonely tooâ€|" she trailed off.

"I suspected for different reasons though."

"I'm unapproachable. I'm a lady, the princess, and I could kill you with my bow in a heartbeat."

"I'm a sorry excuse for a Viking. I can't fight dragons, I'm not tough like the other children, and I'm scrawny." She laughed slightly at the face he made. He smiled, he liked her laugh, it was wild and free.

"That's why I noticed you. I thought, he knows what it's like to be alone." She turned so that her back was to him. "So tell me about Berk." The sudden change of subject startled him.

"This, is Berkâ€|" Hiccup said with a swooping gesture of my arms. A tone of sarcasm entered his voice as he continued "It's twelve day North of hopeless, and a few degrees South of freezing to death. It's located solidly on the meridian of misery." Merida giggled at this. "My village. In a word, sturdy. And it's been here for seven generations, but every single building is new. We have fishing, hunting, and a charming view of the sunsets. The only problems are the pests. You see, most places have mice or mosquitos. We have..." Just then Hiccup was interrupted by the blast of a loud horn. Hiccup grabbed Merida's arm and pulled her into the nearest building. He opened the door to see if his fears were correct. They were. "Dragons" he finished as a burst of flame shot out at hem. He slammed the door just in time. Hiccup looked up at Merida who was grinning. He shook his head and grabbed her arm, pulling her out the now blackened door. Merida was laughing.

"Why don't you just leave?" She said as a smile played at her

lips.

"Most people would leave. Not us. We're Vikings."

"What does that have to do with it?"

"We have stubbornness issuesâ€|" She laughed like she was having the time of her life, dodging fireballs and falling buildings.

"So Hiccup, I have another question!"

"What is it?" they were shouting just to be heard at this point.

"What's with the weird names?"

"Oh, well it's not the worst. Parents believe a hideous name will frighten off gnomes and trolls Like our charming Viking demeanor wouldn't do thatâ€|" they slid under a falling building as Hiccup said this; her hair seemed for once blending in with the surroundings. They finally reached the blacksmith after an interesting run-in with Hiccup's fatherâ€|

"Ah! Nice of you to join the party. I thought you'd been carried off." Gobber said as he worked furiously.

"Who me? Nah, come on! I'm way too muscular for their taste. They wouldn't know what to do with all thisâ€|" I tried to strike an intimidating pose but all I got was a laugh out of both members of my company.

"They need toothpicks, don't they?" Gobber prodded.

"The meathead with attitude and interchangeable hands is Gobber. I've been his apprentice ever since I was little. Well...littler." Merida stifled a laugh at his correction. Gobber was shouting directions to another Viking as Merida watched a building fall.

"See? Old village. Lots and lots of new houses." She nodded, as though entranced by all that was happening around her.

"Hey, who are they?" Merida said pointing to a group of teenagers.

"Oh and that's Fishlegs, Snotlout. The twins Ruffnut and Tuffnut. And Astrid. Their job is so much cooler. Hey Gobber can we go out, please. We need to make our marks."

"Oh, you've made plenty of marks. All in the wrong places. And I don't know how the queen would feel if I sent her daughter into dangerous combat on her first day here." Merida and Hiccup both sighed.

"Please, two minutes. I'll kill a dragon. My life will get infinitely better. I might even get a date."

"You can't lift a hammer. You can't swing an axe..."

"I can shoot my bow!" Merida chimed in. Gobber ignored her.

"You can't even throw one of these!" He indicated to a rope with lead balls attached to the end.

"I don't have to! This will do it for me!" Just then my machine chose that moment to shoot a Viking in the head. "Mild calibration issue!"

"Hiccup. If you ever want to get out there to fight dragons, you need to stop all... thisâ€¦"

"You just pointed to all of me."

"Yes! That's it! Stop being all of you."

"You, sir, are playing a dangerous game. Keeping this much, raw...Vikingness contained. There will be consequences!" Gobber tosses him a sword. Merida nodded in mock approval. Hiccup shot her a "thanks for being so helpful" look. She just shrugged.

"I'll take my chances. Sword. Sharpen. Now." he took the sword and began sharpening it. Merida went over to Hiccup and began asking about the different types of dragons. Hiccup gave her the general rundown and how they could improve his statues. He ended with:

"Night fury! That's the one I'm gonna be the first to kill."

"Tonight's not your night lad, man the fort, Hiccup, they need me out there! Stay. Put. There. You know what I mean." Gobber ran out and was lost in the crowd.

"We're not gonna stay here, are we?" Merida questioned, mischief playing at her face.

"Nope. Help me with this." he said, gesturing to his large contraption. Merida helped him push the contraption outside, but was distracted by her three brothers who were currently provoking a dragon. Merida ran off to get them and Hiccup was left to lug the large contraption up the hill, by himself.

4. Chapter 4 The Aftermath: Merida reflects

Merida sighed as she notched an arrow and sent it flying towards the dragon that her brothers were harassing. She really wanted to see what Hiccup had in mind with his contraption, but her troublesome brothers had other plans.

"Harris, Hubert, and Hamish! Get away from that beast!" Merida sent another arrow flying as she yelled at the boys. They were having too much fun to pay her any attention. Merida let out an exasperated sigh and sent another arrow flying. Why did her brothers have to be so difficult to maintain? She stormed over to her brothers, loosing arrows as she went. She scooped them up into her arm and ran off away from the dragon. She shoved the three boys into a building and went to look for Hiccup after telling her brothers to stay inside. She didn't have to look long before a scream of terror echoed through the village. As she looked up, she noticed that the screamer was Hiccup, and a dragon was chasing himâ€¦ a rather large one at that. She

watched in complete horror as Hiccup was nearly burnt to a crisp. Thankfully a Viking managed to defeat the creature. Merida was about to run out to Hiccup, but a building fell and gave her pause. She slowly worked her way towards Hiccup, and as she got closer she began to realize that Hiccup and the Viking who had saved him were fighting. As Merida reached the two she caught the tail end of the argument.

"Why can't you follow the simplest orders?" The man asked in an exasperated tone, the same one Merida's mother often used with her.

"I can't stop myself. I see a dragon and I have to just... kill it, you know? It's who I am, Dad." Merida was hanging off to the side now. The entire village had gone silent and was listening to this conversation.

"You are many things, Hiccup. But a dragon killer is not one of them." Stoick seemed to have noticed Merida and the rest of the village watching. He turned to Gobber, "Get these two back to the house." He said with a gesture to Merida and Hiccup. Gobber nodded. As the teens were lead away Merida heard Stoick grumble something about cleaning up Hiccup's mess. She noticed Hiccup slump forward a little more. She wanted to reach out and comfort him, but she couldn't. Just then the group of teenagers Merida had asked about earlier emerged from the crowd.

"Quite the performance." The one called Tuffnut said with a smug grin.

"I've never seen anyone mess up that badly. That helped!" Merida was pretty sure this one was Snotlout.

"Thank you, thank you. I was trying, so... I really did hit one!" Hiccup's defence was weak as he shuffled off.

The sun was peaking up over the mountains by the time the trio had reached Hiccup's house. Hiccup had been going on about how he had hit a dragon and Gobber kept making snide remarks, which Hiccup mostly ignored.

"And when he does, it's always with this... disappointed scowl. Like someone skimped on the meat in his sandwich." Hiccup used his voice as he tried to impersonate his father, "Excuse me, barmaid. I'm afraid you brought me the wrong offspring. I ordered an extra large boy with beefy arms. Extra guts and glory on the side. This here. This is a talking fish bone." Merida stifled a giggle, which Hiccup acknowledged with a halfhearted grin.

"You're thinking about this all wrong. It's not so much what you look like. It's what's inside that he can't stand." Gobber's attempt at sympathy was overlooked by the crude manner in which he had stated the obvious.

"Thank you, for summing that up." Hiccup replied sarcastically as he began to push the door to his house open.

"Look, the point is, stop trying so hard to be something you're not." Merida nodded in agreement with Gobber.

"I just want to be one of you guys." Was all Hiccup said before he went inside. Gobber sighed as he turned around, leading Merida to the house her family was staying in. Merida gave one last look over her shoulder and noticed the shape of a young boy slipping through the trees. Merida smiled to herself as she walked forward.

"I recon this isn't the first time this has happened." Merida attempted as she trudged behind Gobber.

"Wasn't the first, and wont be the last. Hiccup is just not a dragon killer. The sooner he learns that, the longer our buildings will last." Merida thought back to what he had said earlier.

"Maybe he just wants to belongâ€¦" She mumble, half to herself.

"What's that?"

"Nothingâ€¦" They walked in silence the rest of the way, giving Merida's mind time to wander. She had been drawn to Hiccup, she wasn't sure why, but maybe it was because she sensed a familiarity. In any case, he was sweet. She was intrigued by the way he talked, it was a slurred speech, but cute. It accented his essence. All Merida knew for sure was that she liked him. He was kind, she could tell. So the idea of him being a killer just didn't fit in her mind. But maybe it didn't have to, after all Hiccup was a Viking and he would have expectations.

5. Chapter 5 Hiccup's Change of Heart

****Authors note: Okay, I think we can all agree that that last chapter sucked. Like I'm not even going to try and explain myself, it was just bad. I thought about taking it down, but I decided not to because I'm to lazy to re-write that entire chapter from Hiccup's POV. Instead I wont try and tell ****_HICCUP'S_**** story through ****_MERIDA_****. I think that was the main problem, because right now I want to focus on Hiccup but I don't want to abandon Meridaâ€¦. I don't knowâ€¦ We will see.****

Hiccup was rather embarrassed about the whole 'confront my son about his uselessness in front of the entire village' thing. But he knew that if he got to that Night Furry, he would be able to reteam himself. As he dashed out the back of his house, a grin had plastered itself to his face. This was it, this was HIS DAY! He couldn't wait to get started. He would make short work of this dragon.

But as it turned out, looking for a dragon that had crash-landed was harder than expected.

"Uggh, the gods hate me. Some people lose their knife or their mug. No, not me. I manage to lose an entire dragon." Hiccup mumbled to himself as he furiously scratched out the map he had been using to keep track of where he had been. Hiccup swatted at a low hanging branch as he walked forward. When the branch snapped back, hitting him on the face, Hiccup was knocked out of his bitter thoughts and began to take in his surroundings. In front of him there was a broken tree and a large gash in the land. Hiccup followed the trail, excitement bubbling up inside him. Hiccup gasped as he realized that his contraption had brought down this mighty beast that lay in front

of him.

"Oh wow. I did it. I did it. This fixes everything." Hiccup was giddy with excitement. He struck a victorious pose as if to prove, to no one in particular, that he was capable of such a feat. "I have brought down this mighty beast!" The dragon shifted under Hiccup's weight, causing him to stumble. Once he had regained his footing, Hiccup pulled out his dagger; poised over the dragon he was about to cut the beast's heart out. Hiccup began to waver on his resolve.

"I'm going to kill you, Dragon. I'm gonna cut out your heart and take it to my father. I'm a Viking!" He paused, wavering on the brink of a decision. Then with ferocity in his voice he cried "I am a Viking!" He was about to lower the blade, when he stopped and looked at the dragon. Not a glimpse, but a proper, in-depth, look. The dragon was scared. And he couldn't, no he wouldn't, take this life. His hands would not be stained with the blood of another yet.

"I did this!" The realization coursed through Hiccup and he slumped forward. In a moment of rushed decisions, he cut the rope and freed the dragon. The rope hadn't even touched the ground before the dragon had Hiccup pinned to a rock. Hiccup looked into the eyes of the beast, searching for, well he didn't know what exactly. And then the dragon released him. Hiccup watched as the Night Fury stumbled through the air.

Hiccup did not faint. He went out from a lack of oxygen due to the fact that he had forgotten how to breathe. Fear had a way of doing that to some people. When Hiccup regained consciousness it was late. He felt the need to sneak back into the village, and made a valiant attempt at avoiding his father before he was caught on the way up to his room.

"I need to speak with you too, son." Hiccup cringed before attempting to casually walk down the stairs.

"I've decided I don't want to fight dragons!" Hiccup blurted out at the same time his father said,

"I think it's time you learn to fight dragons." There was an awkward pause as the two looked at each other, waiting to see who would begin again. Then the pair tried to offer the other the chance to speak first. Finally Stoick began.

"Alright. You get your wish. Dragon training. You start in the morning."

"Oh man, I should've gone first. Uh, 'cause I was thinking, you know we have a surplus of dragon-fighting Vikings, but do we have enough bread-making Vikings, or small home-" Hiccup was cut off as Stoick handed him a large battle axe.

"-You'll need this."

"I don't want to fight dragons." Hiccup interjected.

"Come on. Yes, you do!"

"Rephrase. Dad I can't kill dragons."

"But you will kill dragons." Stoick tried to feign enthusiasm, but his face showed that he didn't truly believe the words he spoke.

"No, I'm really very extra sure that I won't."

"It's time Hiccup." Stoick's voice took a more serious tone, but Hiccup's panicked mind skipped over it.

"Can you not hear me?!"

"This is serious son! When you carry this axe... you carry all of us with you. Which means you walk like us. You talk like us. You think like us. No more of... Thisâ€¦"

"You just gestured to all of me." Hiccup replied rather monotone.

"Deal?" Stoick pressed

"This conversation is feeling very one-sided." Exasperation rose within Hiccup as he said this.

"DEAL?!" Stoick asked, rather aggressively.

"Dealâ€¦" Hiccup sighed.

"Good. Train hard. I'll be backâ€¦Probably."

"And I'll be here. Maybe."

Hiccup sat on his bed, staring out into space. He dreaded what was about to come. He wondered if anyone would notice him missing. Doubtful. Maybe Merida, but she would have no problem fitting in once everyone realized how good she was with her bow. Then he would probably lose his only friend. He rolled over onto his side, trying to muster up the strength to head out. He was aroused by a knock at the door. He sighed as he shuffled forwards. Before he could even reach the door, it swung open and he was staring at the living fire that was Merida's hair.

"Dragon training!" she cried as she leapt through his doorway. "Come on, don't want to be late on our first day!"

"Yahâ€¦ about thatâ€¦"

"Don't tell me you are ditching? Isn't that just what those other kids will expect? And you aren't going to leave me to the company of Snotlout." Merida made a disgusted face as she said the name, like it left an unpleasant taste in her mouth. To be fair, it probably had.

"Yah well no I'm just not-" Merida had grabbed Hiccup's axe and was pulling him out the door before he could finish constructing the thought.

"Oh bye the way," she called over her shoulder "My mother had to go back to the highlands with the boys to prepare for some big event, and my father went off with all the other Vikings, so can I stay with you?" she didn't even wait for a response. "Great, because I told my

parents that I had already asked and that it was fine, they were going to make me leave if I didn't have a place to stay so lucky you, you get a new room mate!"

"I'll try to contain my joy." Hiccup said sarcastically as a smile played at his lips. 'This should be interesting' was all Hiccup thought before Merida dragged him into the arena where he would have to fight to stay alive. Oh and there were dragons.

6. Chapter 6 Training (Merida Transition)

Merida was having the time of her life. She and Hiccup had made it on time to training, though they had received a less-than-warm reception, and been given the run-down of what the training sessions would include. She had barely been able to stand still as she listened to Gobber. She had been disappointed to learn that she would not be allowed to use her bow and arrow every time (they wanted her to have a basic understanding of all weapons). But with her shield over one arm and a sword in the other, she was flying. She dodged the dragon's attacks, she dealt blows, and she managed to catch a glimpse of Hiccup as he struggled to not die. But her streak ended when Snoutlout began (eew) Hitting on her and Astrid. He managed to distract her for just long enough that the Gronckle managed to shoot the two down, Astrid had managed to cartwheel off before the blast. She sighed as she watched from the sidelines. She had given Snoutlout a glare that had set even the toughest Scotsmen on edge, and he had backed off. She focused her attention on Hiccup. He was hopeless, but in a cute way. He couldn't hold a shield, he could barely stand under the weight of his axe, and that suited him. It made him more human.

Merida was so lost in thought, that she hadn't realized what was happening before it was too late. Astrid had left Hiccup in a corner and the Gronckle had gone nuts. He had shot at Hiccup. Then Hiccup, in all his stupidity, had rushed after the shield. The Gronckle was drawn to the movement, and in a flash had pinned Hiccup down. Merida watched in horror as the beast was about to launch a fireball at Hiccup. But at the last minute Gobber used his hooked arm to pull the dragon off Hiccup and send it back to its cave.

"Remember... a dragon will always, always, go for the kill." Merida rushed to Hiccup's side as Gobber pulled him up to his feet. Merida threw her arms around Hiccup, and squeezed him tight.

"Don't you go off and scare me like that!" Merida said as she shot a dirty look to Astrid. Astrid just shrugged it off, making Merida seethe. Merida grabbed Hiccup's axe from the ring floor and handed it to him. "Let's go home." Merida said with one final glance at the ring.

On the walk home Hiccup seemed distracted. She dismissed it with the thought of 'he was almost eaten by a dragon' but still it bothered her. She suppressed the urge to pry it out of him, deciding that would be insensitive. She let out an exasperated sigh that caused her hair in front of her face to billow out. Hiccup seemed to snap out of his pensive thoughts for a moment as he smiled at her. Well that was a startâ€¦|

**_Authors note: This isn't good. Sorry but I had no idea how to

write this. I needed the transition scene for training because next chapter is the big Hiccup/Toothless bonding scene but I didn't want this to be too long so it's not really a chapter, it's more transition thought~y. sorry I just couldn't get this to be any longer without it seeming pointless and a waste of time and rambling~y _**

7. Chapter 7 Hiccup and the Beast

Hiccup made up some lame excuse as to why he was leaving Merida alone. Something about wood, goose feathers, and a cooking pan. Merida eyed him skeptically but just nodded along with it. He backed out of the house and made like he was going to town, then, when he was out of view, veered off towards the path of the dragon. He had been confused by the training session and what Gobber had said. He mulled it over as he entered the glen that the dragon had landed in.

"If dragons always go for the killâ€¦ soâ€¦ why didn't you?" A shiny dragon's scale caught Hiccup's attention. He bent down to inspect it, "Well this is stupid." Hiccup commented to himself harshly. Just as he was about to turn and leave, the Night Fury blasted past him and began trying to scramble up the stone walls. Hiccup grinned as he crouched behind a rock attempting to draw the beast. As Hiccup watched the struggle, he grew confused by the beast's attempts to climb out instead of fly.

"Why don't you justâ€¦ fly away?" Then Hiccup spotted it, the dragon's tail was missing part of the tip. Hiccup began to sketch it feverishly when the charcoal slipped through his hands and bounced away. The beast was alerted by the sound, and locked eyes with Hiccup.

Hiccup walked back to the village late into the dinner that Gobber had prepared for everyone. They seemed to be reviewing the day's dragon training lessons, and of course Gobber would pick Hiccup out as he tried to sit down.

"Where did Hiccup go wrong?"

"He showed up," Ruffnut said as if it was the funniest thing in the world.

"He didn't get eaten," Tuffnut said, trying to out do the twin.

"He's never where he should be." Astrid's voice was cool and calculating as she gave her smug comment. Hiccup felt dejected as he slid next to Merida, who tried to comfort him with a gentle pat on his thigh.

"Thank you Astrid," Gobber said as he stood. "You need to live and breathe this stuff." Gobber placed a large book in the center of the table. "The dragon's manual. Everything we know about every dragon we know of. No attaches tonight, study up."

This was met with a series of complaints from the other teens until they all ultimately decided to leave the book with Merida and Hiccup.

"Read it to me Hiccup." Merida said as she flipped around on the bench so that her head was on his lap. And so he did. He listed the dragons, their special abilities, the dangers, everything the book had on them. When there was a picture he described it to her. They continue like this, with the wind howling outside, and soft comfort inside, until they reached the Night Fury.

"Night Fury. It's blank! Speed unknown. Size unknown. The unholy offspring of lightning and death itself. Never engage this dragon. Your only chance, hide and pray it does not find you."

"Oooh! Spooky, bit like a ghost story." Merida laughed. But Hiccup wasn't listening, he had pulled out his sketchbook and was examining the picture in it to that of the empty book. "Oi!" Merida's call to reality cause him to snap the sketchbook closed. "Everything all right?" she inquired. Hiccup nodded, but his mind continued to wander.

8. Chapter 8 Merida Trains

It was another training day with the Viking and Highland teens. Though perhaps saying that there were many highlander teens present was a lie, most of them had high-tailed it home after the first dragon raid. Merida sighed as she realized that she was the only one from the Highlands to have even bothered to show up at that day's practice. She was even more irritated to notice that Hiccup wasn't paying any attention to his surroundings. He kept trying to get information about the Night Furies from Gobber, who was more concerned with making sure Hiccup didn't let the dragon fry him.

"FOCUS Hiccup! You're not even trying." Gobber chastised. "Today... is all about attack. Nadders are quick and light on their feet. Your job is to be quicker and lighter." Gobber shouted at the group of teen's moving in. Merida drew her bow and notched an arrow and she snuck closer. Just then the dragon's head snapped towards Fishlegs and went for the attach.

"I'm really beginning to question your teaching methods." Fishlegs shouted in a panicked voice.

"Look for its blind spot. Every dragon has one. Find it, hide it it, and strike."

Merida let loose and arrow before dogging behind a wall. Thankfully for her the dragon became to preoccupied with Ruffnut and Tuffnut's constant bickering to follow her. She ran past Hiccup right in time to hear him ask about the Night Fury again.

"Hey, so how would one sneak up on a Night Fury?" Hiccup asked Gobber, blatantly ignoring the Dragon and the immediate death it would bring to him if it found him.

"None one's ever met one and lived to tell the tale. Now get in there." Gobber said with a half-hearted gesture.

"I know, I know, but hypothetically..." Hiccup pressed.

"Hiccup!" Astrid whispered urgently in a way that made Merida's blood

seethe. Hiccup crouched down and tried to follow her and Snotlout out of the dragons reach, but to no avail. The dragon noticed Hiccup and attached. Merida let loose a flood of arrows, but they didn't seem to distract the dragon. Then of course Snotlout tried to flirt with Astrid at that moment.

"Watch out babe. I'll take care of this." Oh god he gave Merida the creeps. She stifled a laugh as his axe mist the dragon by a good meter. "The sun was in my eyes, Astrid. What do you want me to do, block out the sun? I could do that, but I don't have time right now!" The chaos of the battle roared on, and Merida realized to late that Hiccup was completely oblivious to what was going onâ€|again.

"They probably take the daytime off. You know, like a cat. Has anyone ever seen one napping?"

"Hiccup!" Both Gobber and Astrid yelled. Astrid Tumbled onto Hiccup and Merida had the strangest urge to punch her really hard. Or maybe shoot her with an arrow through the heart because for some reason that's the feeling Merida was getting right then.

"Oooh! Love on the battlefield!"

"She could do better." These word filled Merida with a very strong emotion in the pit of her stomach that she wasn't quite able to name. She stormed off and out of the range before anyone could notice. As she left the piercing rage of Astrid's voice, that she knew would be directed at Hiccup, floated around her as she made her way back towards her shared home.

9. Chapter 9 Merida's Storm

**~~Author's note: Hey some of you may have noticed that I finally (after like 9 months) updated. I AM SO SORRY! I have been dealing with a lot of personal stuff and this story just kind of slipped away from my thoughts during it. But in a way it's good because I HAVE SO MANY PLANS FOR MERIDA AND HICCUP! Also, I am going to be starting a new fic once i reach the end of Part 1 of this story which will be a Jack Frost/Elsa story that I feel will probably break your heart. Oh also, In case you have't noticed, thus far the story has been sticking to the how to train your dragon movie plot (and script) a lot. This story is going to come to you in 3 parts, p1) How to train your dragon timeline p2) Brave timeline p3) afterwards timeline (?phrasing a bit off on that last one?). Okay thats all for now folks please enjoy!~~**

Merida sat with her back to the door, sharpening her arrows menacingly. She was irritated with Hiccup for that lousy excuse of a training session and she had been holding back her Scottish temper to long for to long now. Just then she heard the door to the house open and bang close.

"Hello Hiccup." She said with a chill that rivaled that of Berk's.

"Hey Mer, I was just dropping off my stuff from training and then gonna go help Gobber out." Hiccup said distractedly.

"Oh really?" she said slowly turning around on the stool to face him,

the fire in her eyes growing.

"Yah, he said he needed an extra hand today, which is understandable seeing as he only has one." Hiccup tried to joke.

"I don't care." Merida said slowly standing up, her long green dress brushing the floorboards as she stepped closer. "What was that all about?"

"What was what?"

"You know Hiccup, don't lie to me!"

"Look if you're angry about the Astrid thingâ€¦"

"What? You think I'm jealous of that twat? I don't care what you do with her, but I care if a dragon kills you during practice! If you get killed in practice you will never get to kill the dragon that will let you move on and lead that better life you wanted!"

"It was just a slip up of concentration, leave it be!" Hiccup began to turn.

"No I wont! Hiccup you have to be careful you have to be alert you need to care!"

"But I don't care Merida! I don't care about killing dragons! I will never be good with them so I might as well stop."

"Hiccup-"

"No Merida, leave it."

Merida watched in dismay as he banged out the door and out of sight. She humphed to herself and sunk moodily back onto the stool. She blew some hair out of her face as she thought bitterly about how ridiculous Hiccup was. He didn't get it at all and it was infuriating. He just made her so angry and that just made her thoughts muddle together and she hated it. She let an exasperated sigh escape from her lips. She was supposed to be killing dragons not worrying about incompetent Vikings!

10. Chapter 10 Hiccup and the Beast part 2

Hiccup walked through the docks on his way to the forest, managing to snag a fish from a distracted Viking. He slipped it under his shirt as he moved on. He was so infuriated by Merida's words the other day. Where did she get off acting like she knew what was going on? They had only known each other a few weeks so she had no right to judge. Her princess life was so different from his that it was ridiculous that she thought she could relate. She was here because it was her choice, but the life he lived had never given him another chance until this point. He didn't even know if this was a chance, all he knew was that his idea was stupid, would probably get him killed, and he couldn't wait to find out. He sighed. Merida had a point though; he was going to get killed in training if he didn't pay more attentionâ€¦ She drove him crazy sometimes. She was so fiery and passionate even though she sometimes had no right to be! She could get worked up over the slightest of things it was like a weird gift.

And what was that thing with Astrid? He had meant that he felt back for blowing her cover and almost getting killed by a dragon, and then by Astrid. Obviously that wasn't what she had interpreted but he didn't understand why she thought that he thought that she was jealous. Jealous of her Viking skills? Her blond hair? He sighed and shook it out of his head as he came up on the glen that the dragon was in. Hiccup pulled the fish out and threw it into the cove before stepping in as well. He looked around for the dragon but saw nothing. Just then a snort came from behind him. Hiccup slowly turned to see the night fury slowly slinking towards him. Hiccup slowly held out the fish, which then caused his dagger to be exposed. The night fury growled at him, startling Hiccup into removing the dagger and throwing it off to the side. Seeing this the dragon calmed and moved for the fish.

"Huh. Toothless. I could've sworn you had..." Just then a set of sharp teeth appeared from the dragon's gums as it snatched the fish from a startled Hiccup. "... Teeth." Hiccup absent-mindedly finished as the dragon's teeth retracted back into his gums again. The dragon began to press closer to Hiccup with an expectant look plastered on its face. "Uh, no. No, I don't have any more." At this the dragon fell back and began making hacking noises. Suddenly part of the half eaten fish fell into Hiccup's lap. The dragon stared at Hiccup expectantly until Hiccup realized, with disgust, what the dragon wanted. Slowly Hiccup raised the fish to his lips, then ripped off a piece and held it in his mouth. The dragon waited expectantly before Hiccup begrudgingly swallowed. This seemed to please the dragon. Hiccup looked towards the dragon and smiled warily. To his surprise the dragon seemed to smile back. Hiccup stood up and stretched his hand towards the dragon, attempting to pet the beast. Yet the dragon didn't seem to share sentiment and snapped at Hiccup before flying off to sleep on a scalded piece of ground. Hiccup moved forward to sit next to the beast, which seemed to annoy the dragon a bit, but the dragon just ignored him.

Hours later the sun was going down and Hiccup sat on a rock with a stick in his hand as he scratched out a picture of the night fury in the dirt. The dragon seemed curious of Hiccup and stood behind him inspecting the action. Much to Hiccup's surprise the dragon left and returned with a branch of its own. Hiccup watched in amazement as the beast dragged the branch around Hiccup in a seemingly random pattern. Once the dragon was finished Hiccup realized that he was dead center and had no way of getting out without walking through the dragon's artwork. Tentatively Hiccup stood up. He slowly put his foot down on one of the lines, which erected a growl from the beast. Hiccup quickly lifted his foot, which eased the beast. He repeated this several times before moving his foot past the line, to which the dragon had no response. Hiccup then cautiously made his way through the picture without touching the lines. Too late he realized that the path he had chosen had led him straight to the feet of the dragon. Hiccup stood very still, then raised his hand slowly towards the dragon. He was surprised and delighted when the dragon responded by nuzzling his hand slightly.

11. Chapter 11 Merida at the Bonfire

Merida sighed as Gobber told the story of how he lost his arm and leg. The Viking teens seemed so enthralled, but she just couldn't understand why.

"...and with one twist he took my hand and swallowed it whole. And I saw the look on his face. I was delicious. He must have passed the word, because it wasn't a month before another one of them took my leg." Gobber finished with a proud look.

"Isn't it weird to think that your hand was inside a dragon. Like if your mind was still in control of it you could have killed the dragon from the inside by crushing his heart or something." Merida rolled her eyes and tried to catch Hiccup's eye so they could share in the ridiculousness that was Fishleg's theory. But, of course, he was too lost in thought to even notice.

"I swear I'm so angry right now. I'll avenge your beautiful hand and your beautiful foot. I'll chop off the legs of every dragon I fight, with my face." Snotlout made a show of trying to look super manly towards Merida, but she just rolled her eyes and turned away.

"Un-unh. It's the wings and the tails you really want. If it can't fly, it can't get away. A downed dragon is a dead dragon." Gobber said with disinterest. Merida watched Hiccup out of the corner of her eye as his face slowly shifted to one of horror.

"Alright. I'm off to bed. You should be too. Tomorrow we get into the big boys. Slowly but surely making our way up to the Monstrous Nightmare. But who'll win the honor of killing it?" Gobber teased them as he stood. As Gobber walked away the teens all began laying their claims to the beast.

"It's gonna be me." Tuffnut said with a pride to his voice that was sickening. "It's my destiny. See?" He rolled down his sleeve to reveal a red dragon tattoo.

"Your mom let you get a tattoo?" Fishlegs said in awe.

"It's not a tattoo. It's a birthmark." Tuffnut responded rather to quickly for Merida to believe him.

"Okay, I've been stuck with you since birth, and that was never there before." His sister responded.

"Yes it was. You've just never seen me from the left side until now." He glared at Ruffnut as he said this.

"It wasn't there yesterday. Is it a birthmark or a today-mark?" Snotlout retorted. Merida stopped listening to the conversation as she watched Hiccup rise and leave the group, a deep expression on his face. She glanced over at Astrid who was also looking at him, a curious expression on her face that rubbed Merida the wrong way. She caught Astrid's eye and glared her down, but Astrid just shrugged her off, which made Merida even angrier. She stood up and stalked off from the bonfire, back to the house she hoped Hiccup would be at so that he could answer some of her questions.

12. Chapter 12 Hiccup Builds a Tail

Hiccup was a stupid boy sometimes. He lacked the skills needed to fight dragons. But he was a fine smith. He knew what he wanted to do would be hard, but worth it. As he sketched and designed the new tail

he had envisioned for Toothless, he was consumed in the fires of the forge and the desire to help the dragon he had unintentionally grounded. He was so consumed by thought that he didn't notice Merida walk into the forge. She had sat on the table and flipped through all of his sketches before he turned and noticed her.

"Ah! Merida! What are you doing here?" He said, a bit perturbed.

"Oh well I just thought my best friend would tell me he had caught a bloody dragon, but apparently not!" he noticed the way her hair seemed to glow in the fire, only enhancing the fear boiling within him.

"Dragon? What dragon?"

"Well this one I would assume." Hiccup whined as she thrust his sketchbook into his face.

"Oh! That dragon."

"Honestly Hiccup what have you done?" He realized her Scottish accent seemed to become thicker as she grew angrier. It was cute.

"Nothing! I just! Downed a night furry and then accidentally cut off half its tail and am trying to fix it!" He quickly mumbled the last bit.

"You WHAT?! And you didn't tell me? And You are doing WHAT?! And, AGAIN, you didn't tell me!"

"Sorry?"

"No. No sorry, you take me to this dragon right now, I want to see it with my own eyes!"

"No! Merida, he is scared. He barely trusts me. Imagine adding another person to the equation so soon! He would flip! But if all goes as planned, you will be the first person to meet him, okay?" She sighed and gave him a look that said 'Not all is forgiven, you are on thin ice but fine.' That was all Hiccup needed. He smiled at her, a toothy adorable lopsided grin that sealed the deal.

13. Chapter 13 Merida Worries

Hiccup and Merida fell into a comfortable pattern. After the first draft of the tail had failed, Hiccup had dedicated himself to helping this dragon. Of course that meant he was gone a lot. That's where Merida came in. She always sent people on a wild goose chase if they needed him, or came up with some kind of excuse. At night the pair lay by the fire, Hiccup telling her his modifications, what he had learned, and taking Merida's breath away. It was weird, Merida had come to this island to learn how to kill dragons, but the more she listened to Hiccup's stories, the more she wanted to meet this dragon. She wanted to see with her own eyes what Hiccup was now convinced of: Dragons were not the enemy.

This comfort they had within the home was amazing, yet Merida couldn't help but be concerned. The words Gobber spoke were of combat;

something she knew about. Hiccup talked of glorious dreams that nobody had dared dream before. Though she had to admit, his newfound knowledge of dragons had earned him a place on the battlefield that he would not have had otherwise. And Astrid. That girl made Merida's skin crawl and her teeth bunch. She would love to send an arrow through her armor. She had been paying more attention to Hiccup now that he had some standing in the ring. She didn't deserve the time of day from Hiccup, but she couldn't say that.

The day that Hiccup had told her Astrid had almost caught him and toothless, Merida had wanted to strangle him. She was so mad that he had brought the dragon to the village and not shown him to her. What was more, Astrid would have been the first to meet Toothless! Once she had calmed down, she told herself she had nothing to worry about. Hiccup was fiercely loyal; he wouldn't betray her.

14. Chapter 14 Hiccup's Flight to Remember

The Vikings had returned. This meant that Merida's father was back, as well as his. Hiccup loved his dad, and he knew Merida loved hers, but there was a silent mourning for the loss of freedom the two teens had shared. They could no longer discuss Toothless by the fire, and even in hushed voices they feared being overheard. Merida would come to the shop, but Gobber was always there. Hiccup had barely been able to tell her that his latest flight was successful. He hadn't told her how proud his dad was of his new social standing. He knew that she knew he was supposed to kill a dragon because of it, but he couldn't talk to her.

Of course when you lose your best friend and then have to kill a member of the same species as your other best friend, the only logical option is to run away. Often times those plans are made difficult when a blond Viking gets involved. How Astrid had found out about the glen, he didn't know. Not even Mer knew where he kept Toothless.

"Aggh! What the- What are you doing here?" Hiccup tried to remain calm.

"I want to know what's going on. No one just gets as good as you do. Especially you. Start talking! Are you training with someone?" She was inspecting him, trying to piece it all together.

"I know this looks really bad, but you see...this is, uh..." Just then the sound of Toothless moving hit Hiccup's ears. He had to get Astrid out. "You're right! You're right. I'm through with the lies. I've been making... outfits. So you got me. It's time everyone knew. Drag me back. Go ahead. Here we go." But of course she was a viking, so instead of being reasonable, she flipped him over her shoulder. Jeeze, she must not like outfits! She did wear the same thing every day! "AAAAUUGGGHHH! Why would you do that?!"

"That's for all the lies!" She hit him with the butt of her axe, "That's for everything else!" Hiccup let out a yelp of pain. Toothless heard the yelp, because he was a dragon and so why wouldn't he hear the yelp.

"Oh man!" Hiccup watched in disbelief as the nightfury took a defensive position and began snarling at Astrid. And then he pounced.

Of course the dragon would pounce.

"Get down! Run! Run!" Astrid yelled as she grabbed her axe, ready to cut Toothless a new one.

"No!" Hiccup tossed her axe aside and began to calm his friend down. He whispered soothingly to the dragon. "She's a friend," turning to Astrid he continued, "You just scared him."

"I scared him?!" Disbelief mixed with anger as she continued, "Who is him?"

"Astrid, Toothless. Toothless, Astrid." And with a look of disgust, Astrid began to flee to the village. Turning to Toothless Hiccup muttered, "We're dead. Where do you think you're going?" He said to the dragon as it turned away in a satisfied manner. "We have to get her!" Hiccup was sure the dragon rolled its eyes at him. Nevertheless, he allowed Hiccup to climb adored.

Maybe kidnapping her wasn't a good idea, and perhaps he shouldn't have put her at the top of a tree, but he needed her to listen!

"Hiccup! Get me down from here!"

"You have to give me a chance to explain."

"I'm not listening to ANYTHING you have to say!"

"Then I won't speak. Just let me show you." Extending a hand he continued, "Please, Astrid." She really didn't have any other options unless she wanted to climb down. She finally got on behind Hiccup.

"Now get me down."

"Toothless? Down. Gently." Hovering in place for a moment Hiccup thought it opportune to say, "See? Nothing to be afraid of." And of course the dragon took that as, now lets turn this into a wild ride. Toothless! What is wrong with you?! Bad dragon! He's not usually like this. Oh no...Toothless, what are you doing?! We need her to like us! And now the spinning. Thank you for nothing you useless reptile." He was just about to give up on this silly thing when Astrid, white as a sheet and clinging on for dear life, finally spoke.

"Okay! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Just get me off of this thing." Taking it as his cue to behave, toothless leveled out into a calming ride. Gasping in awe as she opened her eyes, Astrid gripped Hiccup tighter and resting her chin on his shoulder spoke again. "Alright I admit it. This is pretty cool. It's... amazing." She paused, "So what now?" she pressed on, ignoring Hiccup's groans of pain. "Your final exam is tomorrow! You know your going to have to killâ€¦ to kill a dragon!" She finished in a hushed whisper.

"Don't remind me." She was about to press him, but suddenly toothless dipped. The dragon seemed anxious, barking at them to be quiet.

"Get down." Hiccup hissed.

"What's going on?"

"I don't know. Toothless, you have got to get us out of here bud." Looking around he saw hoards of other dragons bringing in livestock. "It looks like they are hauling in their kill!"

"What does that make us?" Astrid said, worry and panic filling her voice. Hiccup said nothing. They watched as dragons streamed into a cave.

"What my dad wouldn't give to find this." They continued watching as the dragons began dumping their kill into a huge pit. "It's satisfying to know that all our food has been dumped into a hole." He said, his voice flat with sarcasm.

"They're not eating any of it." Astrid sounded puzzled as she continued to watch. All of a sudden they watched as a Gronckle dropped a small fish into the pit, and was promptly swallowed whole by another dragon.

"What is that?" Astrid yelled in hushed horror.

"Alright bud, we gotta get out of here. Now!" Toothless managed to get them out of the cave in one piece.

They finally made it back to the cove. Astrid was talking about what they had just seen, but Hiccup wasn't listening. His attention was only drawn when she said,

"Let's find your dad!"

"No! No, not yet. They'll kill Toothless!" He couldn't let that happen. "Astrid, we have to think this through carefully."

"Hiccup, we just discovered the dragons' nest...the thing we've been after since Vikings first sailed here. And you want to keep it a secret? To protect your pet dragon? Are you serious?"

"Yes." Hiccup responded firmly and without hesitation.

"Okay, then what do we do?"

"Just give me until tomorrow. I'll figure something out."

"Okay." And just like that she punched him. "That's for kidnapping me." Then she bent forward. Expecting another punch, Hiccup winced. What came next was much gentler. A quick peck on the cheek, "That's for everything else." Blushing Hiccup turned away.

"What are you looking at?" He said to Toothless.

15. Chapter 15 Merida Plays I Spy

Merida had been worried sick. That scrawny no good Viking had gotten himself into a heap of trouble and then bolted. She figured he was with that dragon of his, and set her mind to finding it. After all, how hard could it be to find a huge dragon in broad daylight? Hard. The answer is hard. She had dwindled away the day searching for that lousy boy. She had nearly given up, the sun had gone down a while ago and he was probably home by now. As she began heading back to the

village, a dark figure swooped overhead. She heard a voice drifting from it and figured this must be Toothless and Hiccup was riding him! She chased after the dragon in the direction it had landed. By the time she reached the small valley, the rider had dismounted and was walking away. That was when she realized it was riders, plural. There was a blond with him. Astrid. Boiling rage filled Merida, it took all her willpower not to go up and slap them. She figured that there was a perfectly reasonable explanation, and she would ask Hiccup for it when that Viking left. Following behind quietly, unable to hear what they were saying but seeing them perfectly, Merida planned the long-winded speech she would give him. She was too distracted to see that they had stopped walking and almost revealed herself. She stopped and hid behind a tree, able to hear every word.

"That's for kidnapping me. That's for everything else." And then Astrid did the unthinkable. She kissed Hiccup. Merida's heart sank in a way she had never thought possible. Tears sprang to her eyes. She had met Toothless first? He had planned it, kidnapping her to take her on a romantic dragon ride. Well he could date whom he wanted but he had promised her. She slowly backed away and pushed deep into the forest.

She ran until she couldn't run. And then she walked until she couldn't walk. She found herself curled on a rock, her knees tucked under her chin. Hot tears of rage, and something else, she wasn't sure, fell down her cheeks. She had been wrong to trust Hiccup. She had kept his secret. She had helped him hide it. He had betrayed her. Well no more. She was done with him.

16. Chapter 16 Merida Witnesses Unraveling

****AUTHOR'S NOTE: ****Have you noticed that I started posting again? Well that's because finals is right around the corner and I am the queen of procrastinating. But in this procrastination I got over a bump that had been holding me back. See, for a long time, I didn't know if I wanted Hiccup and Merida to ride the dragon to the cave, or if I wanted to stick to the canon of the movie. I had some good reasons for both, but then I thought, what is better than being the first to ride the dragon (but find out your best friend is lying to you)? Being the first one to know about the dragon! And because she is Merida she would have been super excited. The whole Astrid thing will make for great drama and I think it works J Well without further ado, your next chapter!

Merida didn't say anything to Hiccup. She didn't give him words of comfort about the daunting task ahead. She thought about giving him a cool 'good luck' but that seemed almost too cruel. Instead she took her place in the spectator stands, and remained absolutely still. She glared down at Hiccup and Astrid, as they got all close before he entered the room. Well he could fraternize with anyone that wasn't her problem. Then, of course because he is in fact Hiccup, he did the unexpected. And his father did the expected. And pandemonium ensued. Merida, in all her rage could not forget that this was her friend. She rushed forward to the walls of the arena, but Astrid got there first. The two teens dogged the fire, Merida clung to the walls in fear. Just then a shadow darted over Merida and she knew it was Toothless.

"Hiccup!" She screamed, half in fury and half in fear. Hiccup seemed

to hear her and looked up. He went pale white, knowing what would come. Chaos followed as Toothless blasted a hole in the wall. Merida was able to climb into the ring as Vikings rushed to subdue the beast and Hiccup tried to save it. Astrid, in all her glory tried to stand up to Stoick. And before Merida could get to Hiccup and the dragon, they were both carted away on Stoick's orders. Merida tried to follow, but her dad picked her up and tossed her over his shoulder.

"Oh no you don't lassie."

"But dad you don't understand! Toothless, he wont hurt Hiccup. He is safe, you have to let me help him!"

"I don't have to do anything missy. You lied and you are not safe. So until I get back from the raid's I'm sure Stoick will take us on, you are staying in here." He tossed her into the house they had shared and bolted the door behind him as he left. Merida just rolled her eyes, grabbed her bow, and walked out the back door. Her father, in all his protective love, was not always the most practical man. Her mother would have been sure to chain her to the bed to keep her from running off, but her dad was the kind to forget they have two doors.

17. Chapter 17 Merida in Battle

****Author's Note: ****Hey so I don't want anyone to get the wrong idea with where this story is going. The end goal (relationship wise) has always been and will always be Merida/Hiccup. Merida is stubborn and won't admit her feelings; Hiccup is self conscious and unsure of himself. I have always felt that Astrid helps him get over his uncertainties, but they are not going to end up together. They are young and make bad decisions but ultimately are gonna be with each other!

Merida watched Astrid leave the cliff. Glares were exchanged between them, per usual. Hiccup stood alone, the thinking face plastered over his normal one. She approached cautiously. Merida silently approached. Her hair billowing, her blue dress shimmering, and he sheath slung over her shoulder.

" You broke your promise." Hiccup looked up in surprise. "You said I would be the first to meet him. So now it is officially broken." She didn't want him to know she had seen. She wanted him to tell her. "All those people, getting pretty friendly with him before I get a chance to ride him makes me want to shoot something." A smile crept across his face.

"Well what if I told you, you cold ride your own dragon?"

"Well then I would say, you still broke your promise, but I'm listening." She was hurt he hadn't told her about Astrid, but admittedly he had other things on his mind.

Well obviously the other Viking teens would have found out, or figured out Hiccup's plan. To be fair though, they needed the help. As each teen took their own dragon, Merida set her jaw in a firm line. She hated the way Astrid was looking at Hiccup. What made matters worse, was he climbed on to the same dragon as her. She shook

it off as her dragon began to rise in the air. She remembered the days of riding her horse, and knew that this was going to be just as good.

Getting to the island was easy. The dragons seemed to have a homing sense that led them straight there. As soon as they approached the island, they saw all hell was breaking loose. Hiccup relayed his plan, and everyone seemed to be fine with it. Merida let her arrows fly true, but they were no match for the dragon's hide. Luckily she had brought backup. Pulling out a sword, she began hacking the dragon in an attempt to slow it down. Merida tried to keep an eye on Hiccup, worried he might trip over his own feet, or something else as equally ridiculous and cute. But for a period of time she lost him. And then he was riding Toothless, and the huge monster was chasing the two of them. And she couldn't help because at that moment she saw what looked like the lifeless body of her father. She swooped down, hoping that these two idiots would both respectively be okay.

"Dad! Wake up! Mom will kill me if you don't come home in one piece. She'll say 'Merida, a lady does not let her father get his other leg eaten by a dragon. A bear is one thing, but a dragon is quite another!' and I don't want a huge history lesson on that!" She was crying at this point, shaking him.

"No I suppose you don't want that." He responded weakly. Merida was so relieved.

"Don't you move, dad. I'm gonna go help Hiccup. You stay here!" He just nodded, a faint smile playing at his lips. As Merida turned around she watched in horror as Hiccup and Toothless were swallowed by pure fire. Then everyone was consumed by the ash and smoke.

It was silent. Merida held her breath, waiting for the cloud to clear. Finally, she was able to make out a dragon figure. Toothless. It was heartbreaking. Stoick the vast suddenly seemed so small.

"I did this. I'm so sorry." Merida bit back a sob that threatened to overwhelm her as Stoick's voice cracked a farewell. Then, because sometimes the world gives you a miracle, Toothless unfolded his wings to reveal a breathing Hiccup.

18. Chapter 18 Hiccup Lives the Dream

****Author's Note:**** THIS IS NOT THE LAST CHAPTER. It is however the end of Part 1 (the timeline or Berk) Stay tuned for Part 2 (The timeline of Brave)

Hiccup woke up slowly, then all at once. A dragon, Toothless, was sitting on his bed.

"Oh, hey Toothless. Okay, okay! I'm happy to see you too, bud. Now just- I'm in my house. You're in my house. Uh...does my dad know you're in here?!" The dragon's happy expression made him think that, yes, this was all very natural by now. But the good mood was spoiled for a brief moment as Hiccup stepped out of bed. A prosthetic foot. Right. He would have to get used to that. As he exited the house, shouts of congratulations and praise filled the air. This was an amazing moment, but Hiccup was just drifting through it. Merida. Where was that girl? He needed to speak to her, and since he had now very

officially broken his promise to her, he figured no time like the present to introduce her to Toothless. Before he had a chance to go off and find her he was surrounded by friends and his father and new dragon riders?

"I knew it. I'm dead."

"No but you gave it your best shot!" His father laughed. Gobber came up to him, and the two quickly discussed the prosthetic limb he now carried. And then came Astrid. She kissed him, which he had not been expecting. It was nice, but all he could think about was finding Merida. He finally got a chance to ask where she had gone.

"She and the rest of the Scotsmen that were here left this morning. They came here to fight dragons, and well—" The Viking Hiccup had asked shrugged and trailed off. Hiccup nodded. He turned to Toothless, a sly grin on his face.

"Think we can catch them?"

It really wasn't that hard. It was maybe an hour of fly time. Hiccup had Toothless put him down on the boat, and hover around. He didn't want the boat to tip. Merida had her back to him. Her hair flying around her and this time a deep green dress, it was all so right. He walked up to her, and quietly put his arm on the railing of the ship, right next to hers. She jumped, as if she had been jerked out of a deep thought. Her eyes lit up when she finally computed what was going on. She pulled him close into the most painfully wonderful hug he could imagine.

"Hiccup! You finally woke up!" Her eyes were bright with happiness. "I'm so sorry, we didn't know when you would wake up and we stayed as long as we could, but you're here and I was so worried!" She seemed to be processing several emotions because just then her face shifted into a scowl. She smacked him, rather hard, on the arm. "Hiccup you broke your promise!"

"I know Mer, but in my defense Toothless came out of that place all on his own and—"

"No, before that. With Astrid." She sounded so hurt, it took Hiccup by surprise.

"Merida, that no! oh gods no it wasn't like that. Odin's beard. She followed me and saw toothless and then was going to tell the village and then the dragon kidnaped her but I swear I didn't plan for her to meet him. I barely knew her at the time."

"But she kissed you. After you flew, it looked like a date. I don't care who you date Hiccup," for some reasons those words stung him in a new way. "I just, felt hurt and I don't know I'm sorry."

"Me too." He shuffled his feet for a second, and then quickly blurted out something he felt he might regret in a moment. "Merida, I don't like Astrid like that. I know she likes me like that now, but she didn't before all this and I don't want you to go back to Dunbroch thinking that there is anything going on between us." A smirk crept up Merida's lips. Hiccup quickly turned away, blushing profusely he finished, "So I will see you soon okay?" All of a sudden he felt a tug on his shirt spin him around. Merida grabbed the front of his

vest and pulled him towards her.

"Defiantly." She said, and then kissed him rather passionately. The two teens broke apart, both blushing a bit.

"I'llâ€|" Hiccup couldn't seem to grasp the words, "Write! I'll right."

"Yesâ€| me too." Merida said slyly. Hiccup smiled, and walked away almost drunkenly. He then realized his mistake,

"Wrong wayâ€|" Merida laughed into her hands and he walked back to the dragon, and flew back to Berk.

End
file.